M1401
Wednesday, May 8, 1968
New York City
Group III

Mr. Nyland: ...because last week there was no meeting. So, what will we do. Meet anyhow? Sit and talk? What would you like. If I'm not here, what would you do.

Someone: I think it could continue without you.

Mr. Nyland: You can drink coffee, you know, and you say to someone, says "Now so-and-so"—what do you think of Johnson, or whatever you want to talk about. And then someone says "Now, do you think he's Conscious," and then you're back again ... [laughter] ... you're back again on "Where do you want to be." And after a little while of course you're down again, but maybe someone introduces and says "How about Objectivity."

Do you want to try it next week? I'll be in Boston, you see, so I won't be here. You want to come anyhow? All right, Jean, if we have coffee? At least we can have that; and bring your food for yourself, it makes it a little bit more continuous and then it'll be a surprise when I happen to be here.

All right. So next week you'll come and it'll be like this.

Now, what do we talk about today—or, what did we talk about last time that we can continue with. Anything happen with this particular week ... two weeks. Nothing happened. Not important?

Jim Huntington: Can I ask a question?

Mr. Nyland: Yah, you can ask questions.

Jim: It's about self-Observation. I'm not sure on how it should proceed ... I don't quite understand what should be Observed.

Mr. Nyland: Why do you want to know.

Jim: Because I'm trying, and I'm lost about that. Do you know what I mean?

Mr. Nyland: How do you go about it.

Jim: I try to keep myself Awake to what I'm doing.

Mr. Nyland: Ah, I don't know. You use the word 'Awaking' and 'being Awake' to something in kind of a... You say "Come on, wake up" and so forth, you know, in an ordinary sense. Because, *that* we don't mean. So when you say you're trying to be 'awakened' or what, what do you mean by that. Huh?

Jim: Semi-conscious.

Mr. Nyland: No, it's no good.

Jim: Well, I mean that's all I'm able to do. Um, I've found, you know, if I try to keep up with all that I'm doing with this, I get in my way ... in my own way, so I know that that's not it.

Mr. Nyland: What else do you know that it isn't. Maybe out of that you come to a point where you find out what is really meant.

Have you any idea what is meant when one says I would like to 'Wake Up' to myself?

Jim: In a sense yes, I think so.

Mr. Nyland: Yah? Good. Let's hear it, what do you know now.

Jim: It's hard to put into words what I...

Mr. Nyland: Is it really? Oh, it's not so difficult. Mark can tell you. Mark, tell him.

Mark Oberon: Are you referring to self-Observation? Is there a question about it?

Jim: It's one of the two.

Mark: Have you walked as if you had then a body?

Mr. Nyland: Let's find out first why you want to do it.

Jim: I don't know. I've been thinking about that since last Monday.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. Were you here last Monday?

Jim: Yes, sir.

Mr. Nyland: But you didn't ask a question last Monday, did you?

Jim: There were too many.

Mr. Nyland: That's right [laughter] couldn't get a pin in between, could you.

Jim: No, I couldn't. You answered a lot more questions than I had to ask.

Mr. Nyland: That's what I thought. [laughter] And now, why are you interested. Have you ever read anything of Gurdjieff?

Jim: Oh. Yes, I've read too much. That's one of the questions that I...

Mr. Nyland: Oh. That's the trouble, huh?

Jim: Yeah.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. It's difficult to choose.

Jim: I thought so. I've read so many things, I've got to stop thinking about it.

Mr. Nyland: Then Awareness would be good, because it is not thinking.

Jim: I ran across a term that Mr. Nott used: it's self-sensing.

Mr. Nyland: Self-sensing?

Jim: Yeah: Better than self-Observation.

Mr. Nyland: Oh. Who uses it?

Jim; Mr. Nott.

Mr. Nyland: Mr. Nott. Oh. Does he explain what he means by it?

Jim: It's hard to... Really, he didn't say. It was a quote from Gurdjieff, and I could only just... He didn't explain it, he just said you should self-sense. I'm not ... I never ran across that term.

Mr. Nyland: Doesn't help much, did it.

Jim: It does... It does.

Mr. Nyland: Does it?

Jim: Yeah.

Mr. Nyland: Oh. What do you mean, then, when you say 'self-sense.'

Jim: It's, uh, not so overbearing of ... from an intellectual center I'm not watching, I just...

Mr. Nyland: Ah. I don't know. Does it help any when you say that—overbearing?

Jim: I feel a little less edgy.

Mr. Nyland: The question is always: What do you really want.

Jim: I've been thinking about that.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. Because I'm now a little afraid, you know.

Jim: Uh-huh. Well, if you can straighten things out just a little.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. Let's start by keeping your feet on the ground: And you walk on the street, and what are you thinking about while you walk.

Jim: It's too many things I try to stop. It's mostly just random.

Mr. Nyland: It's woozy.

Jim: Yeah. Incredibly.

Mr. Nyland: How about when you sit. It keeps on thinking?

Jim: It stops sometimes. But, it stops sometimes. But rarely, you know. In the morning or in the evening when I going to sleep it decreases.

Mr. Nyland: Can you stop it now—kind of?

Jim: It takes a big sigh, you know.

Mr. Nyland: Then that's okay, nobody objects to it. If you take a big sigh, then it is less?

Jim: I relax, it seems.

Mr. Nyland: That's right. Could you relax now? [pause] It's already much better. If there are thoughts... You know, you feed thoughts because you want to continue by having them there. If you try not to feed them, if you try not to think about the thoughts that are now in your mind, if you give your mind now something to do—let's say, just by looking at the table, and to be there and look at the table—and the table you describe it for yourself if you like and, as you are doing this, what other thoughts come in your mind.

Jim: It leads to awareness.

Mr. Nyland: I think... I'd like to know the kind of thoughts that come and interfere. For instance, I can look at the table and think of my mother.

Jim: Yeah. Well, I can tell you right away what was ... too was there: I started watching myself watching it. In other words...

Mr. Nyland: No, don't let's make it complicated. Because, it's very simple. You sit, there is a table, you have a couple of eyes and you get an image of that table in your brain and you recognize there is a table; and if you describe it you can say it has a color and it is three foot square, you know, and it has legs, if you keep on saying to yourself different things that you now in an ordinary sense observe ... that you watch with your eyes, are there other thoughts in the brain that interfere with that?

[pause] Are there?

Jim: Well, I'm not sure right now if I can answer about that.

Mr. Nyland: Well...?

Jim: I can't recognize it.

Mr. Nyland: You can't recognize *what*. Are there thoughts?

Jim: I can recognize that there are thoughts.

Mr. Nyland: Are there? But, when you cannot recognize them then it doesn't matter. Does it?

Jim: That's true—I can't recognize it.

Mr. Nyland: Good. Now, when you look at the table can you change the expression on your face? There has to be something in your brain that tells you to change the expression or move your face in some way or other. In the same way, you say "All right I'm going to sit, now I move my am." I had them on my knees, I sit there straight, I straighten up and so forth—all these things take place from the brain giving a certain command to your body to do certain things.

Jim: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: Supposing, now, you move your am and you stretch it out and you put it on the table, take it back again. Make a fist out of your hand, undo it, stretch your fingers and so forth, all the time your brain is busy, isn't it...

Jim: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: ...and at the same time it happens to hear what happens on the street, and sometimes by looking you see that someone is making a movement, but that is very small compared to your activity in looking at the table.

You have to learn a little bit more to have your brain concentrate on the things you are doing or that you become interested in, and you have to learn not to give attention to the different thoughts that happen to come and interfere.

That's the first step...

Jim: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: ...so that's why I ask "When you walk on the street, what are you thinking about." If you walk on the street and you're thinking about all kind of thoughts and you're not there at all, it's quite different from walking on the street and watching your feet if you bend down like this, or if you look at the sky and keep on walking.

But, the attention has to be in your brain first for certain things before your brain will ever be able to be useful to you. As it is now it's very woozy, and it goes left and right, helter-skelter, turning around without rhyme or reason.

Jim: Well, it's...

Mr. Nyland: You see what I mean?

Jim: I understand what you mean...

Mr. Nyland: Good.

Jim: ...but that isn't the fact that it happens.

Mr. Nyland: Well, what is happening.

Jim: Well, I ... I have a range of thoughts which I center on and...

Mr. Nyland: But that's what I'm asking: What kind of range of thoughts are interfering.

Jim: Ah.

Mr. Nyland: Huh? Didn't we talk about that? I was saying you look at the table, and I say "What other thoughts are there."

Jim: Oh. I thought you were asking about all the things that churn or are below...

Mr. Nyland: No, no. I'm not interested even in hearing about it...

Jim: Yeah, right.

Mr. Nyland: ...I only want to know that they exist, and why do you continue to think about that when you are looking at the table. [silence] You're not looking at the table, you're now thinking.

Jim: I was looking... No. Right ... you're right.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. So, now let's eliminate the thinking. There's the table, will you now aloud describe the table? [silence] I don't hear anything yet.

Jim: Oh, you want to hear that.

Mr. Nyland: I want to hear your brain function.

Jim: [chuckle] Well, it's a table with four legs, pink dish with cookies on it, a number of white cups, a book of Kierkegaard, napkins, spoons, bowl of sugar—crystal bowl.

Mr. Nyland: All right. All right. Now, during this little period did you have other thoughts?

Jim: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: What.

Jim: I'm not sure. I can't remember.

Mr. Nyland: Now ... and then they are not worth it.

Jim: Right. They were just ... just passing.

Mr. Nyland: Then it is not worth it. Because if you don't remember it there were no thoughts, it's just a little tumultuous going on in the rest of the brain. But if you concentrate on that what you were saying—here is a table with four legs and there's a pink plate and it has some cookies on it and I see it and there are cups, and so forth—your brain is busy only saying those things.

Right?

Jim: Yeah.

Mr. Nyland: Good. You use this kind of a method, now, for yourself. When you sit you say "I have a head, I have arms, I have legs, I move my head, I move my arms, I make a fist," and all

the time your brain is interested in the movements of your body.

Can you do that? Yah, will you do that? Will you do that every day?

Jim: I've been doing that for some time.

Mr. Nyland: I don't care ... if you have, then you don't appear to do it...

Jim: Yeah, right.

Mr. Nyland: ...because you...

Jim: Do you mean constantly—throughout the day?

Mr. Nyland: What I'm trying to do is to clean your brain up a little bit. It is very woozy, and to some extent it's dirty. Because you allow all kind of thoughts to take place and take hold of you, and there is nothing in you that prevents it.

What I wish is that you have some kind of a mastery over the thoughts you want to think—you see?—and not to allow all kind of thoughts to enter and play havoc with you. So, for that I take an object outside and you keep on describing it and you take yourself as an object and you keep on describing it, unless your brain is first functioning a little bit more normal there is no use talking about self-Observation. Self-Observation won't help you to get your brain straight. It only can be done when the brain is already almost straight or at least functioning more or less normally, but when it's woozy you have to clean it up first.

So, if you're really interested in Work then let's start with ordinary life. Okay? You understand now what I meant as principle?

Jim: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: Then you can talk about it next time when I see you.

Okay? Good.

What other kind of problems or questions; or, whatever you want to talk about go ahead, talk.

It's a good question—what he has—you know? It's to find out that he really has nothing to work with. It's a very unfortunate condition; because there are too many thoughts that usually crowd in on a person and they don't know even where to place it, and as a result the thought ... one crowds the other out, and you don't get anywhere whatsoever. It's like a chicken without a head; because this kind of a head with that kind of a brain doesn't help at all to think straight, you have to learn how to use the different parts of yourself—the organs that are given to you—more or less in a normal way so that they function healthily. And this is not healthy, it's sick.

Now, what you...

Linda Newman: Mr. Nyland? I really ... Working from ... when I was making a Work attempt which seemed more intense than usual, but I had no sense of ... it seemed to be intense, and what would happen is that there was an attempt at which it seemed very intense and there...

Mr. Nyland: What was intense.

Linda: Well, I ... my Work attempt in the sense of, uh, um, it seems that I was concentrating more on observing myself, and, um...

Mr. Nyland: At what time. When did you do it.

Linda: Well, one of the times I was sitting ... and I finished eating and I was sitting in a restaurant. And it was the day after I –[inaudible]-- and I was feeling in a particularly good state at that time, so I decided to attempt to Work. And...

Mr. Nyland: How. How did you make the attempt. [pause] Were you finished with the dinner or whatever; and the thought comes about Work, and then what is the next.

Linda: Well, what I tried to do is that, first I know there's something in myself that wants to Work, and I try to—first, before I start to Work—try to think about something and try to have more of a sense of myself. And then I can begin to observe my physical body, and what...

Mr. Nyland: Where do you start.

Linda: Where? With myself.

Mr. Nyland: What is the kind of process that you go through.

Linda: Usually it's that, um, I'm just sitting. I start by sitting very still; and, um, if it's still I'm trying to get more of a sense of my body and breathing—usually I use that to a certain extent, my breathing...

Mr. Nyland: Breathing? Yah.

Linda: ...and then, um, I would start thinking. I ate a little more—um, some peas, some rice—and I was moving very slowly and watching my hands and still trying to still have a sense of my body. And when I finished, um, I would just ... there wasn't so much to do in a chair, so I would intentionally move and shift every once in a while, or move my hand along the side of my arm.

But this also happened another time, when I started late at night.

Mr. Nyland: No, let's stay with one time only.

Linda: Okay.

Mr. Nyland: Because this is now ... I'm trying to get a picture of you finishing your lunch; and

then the thought comes and then you want to become Aware. That's the idea, isn't it. So there is something that should take place in your brain, shouldn't it. Because the Awareness is something that is recorded in your brain, and that becomes for you knowledge.

Sometimes we say it is simply a 'fact' that I want to have in my brain, and a fact about myself. You see, you have to define a little bit more of what you really are after, so that then you know in what direction you can go. We talk about an Awareness, an Awareness is the acceptance of myself that I exist.

Linda: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: You see? So as soon as I say I want to 'Sense' myself, it is really that because of the Sensing I come to the realization of my existence; and that that realization takes place in a certain part of my brain, and I say that is the beginning of Consciousness for me, or the beginning of the little 'I' starting to function.

So when the thought comes that you want to Work and you say "Now I would like to have something in me that starts to Work" it's quite correct, but you have to be clear about it—what that what has to Work, what it has to do. And it has to Observe, we simply say I would like to become 'Aware' of myself as I am as I sit or as I move my hands, arms—whatever—or as perhaps I am breathing; and then I become Aware of the existence of certain parts of my body, and sometimes of the existence of the totality of my body.

You see what I mean now.

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: It has to be a little bit more detailed and more described for yourself what you actually are trying to do. Because, it cannot be left vague. There is something very definite as an attempt that I make when I say I would like to become 'Observant' of myself. What I mean by that, that a certain part of me would like to be Objective to the rest of me, and that even the word 'I' when I use it, has a very definite meaning: That there is something of an Objective kind ... I say an Objective faculty which becomes Aware of the existence of me ... the rest of my body.

So then when you say the 'breathing,' what is it of the breathing that you Observe. The question that your body is breathing and takes in air ... and goes in the lungs and you exhale, makes perhaps a certain movement of the chest or part of your body, moving when the air is filling you and when the air is exhaled. One becomes Aware of that as a process; and I then notice that certain things take place, the same way as I put my hand on the table and I lift my

fingers up like this, I can be Aware of the fact that my fingers are moving. And if I now know that they are moving I would like to register in me the fact only that they are moving; without describing my hand at all, and only say "Yes, I am aware—that is, the little 'I'—is Aware of the fact that my fingers are moving up and down. The index finger, my middle finger, my ring finger, my middle finger, my index finger, my thumb; I make a fist and I stretch it out; these are simple movements of my body of which something in my brain becomes Aware. This I call 'Work'. That is the beginning of the accumulation of certain facts about myself which I now register as I now know that I have had facts about my hand ... which hand was moving and I can recall it, and I also know that the facts that have been registered were simply there in an intellectual way only, without any description of ... that I like my fingers or that they moved very gracefully.

You understand, now, what I mean: I Observe, but it means to make it an Awareness it has to be an Observation without any partiality. So when I say Work on myself starts out with the wish that I want to become 'observant' of myself or a part of myself; but that that what I Observe also has to remain a fact which is registered as such without any further description or without any like, you see it has to be free intellectually.

Now this is, you might say it's a long explanation, and all during this period when you were listening and you were sitting, were you Aware of that fact that you were sitting?

Linda: I tried to be, but it wasn't very...

Mr. Nyland: Yah, I noticed. But, you see, it goes away; and that is the difficulty whenever one is present with someone else, because a great deal of the energy goes to the ordinary brain and of course is used up by ordinary sense organs. So when you are alone and you come after you are through with eating and you sit quietly by yourself, something of you has to become separated from the rest of you. And it may be in the beginning as if it is separated, at the same time one can have an experience that that what is separated receives information about yourself.

So when that is established and when you are sitting quietly; you try to hold on to that kind of a separation while you now get up or while you now want to move your arm like this, all of that requires energy and it goes in an ordinary way same way as I move my hand at the present time in order to gesticulate a little bit and emphasize a point.

So it is really quite simple but you have to know exactly what you want to do, otherwise it is of no use.

All right? You understand now?

Linda: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: Yah—a little bit better?

Linda: Yes, I think so. Could I just ask...

Mr. Nyland: Yah, go ahead. [Aside (to Jim): Now you watch, concentrate now on what she's saying and no other thoughts in your mind. Just listen very attentively to what she is saying. Make your brain work for you, don't let the brain work on you. You have something in your brain that tells your brain what to do, and it is not your brain that tells you what to do. You understand that difference? Okay, now you listen very attentively to what she is saying.]

Linda: There is a point at which I seem ... I seem to be reaching some sort of Impartiality, and I'm not sure and I try not to think about it but just to watch, but there is a point at which I get a feeling; and this might include the answer to my question, but I get a feeling of anticipation ... or excitation and fear at the same time, and the fear is very, very mild and I'm very aware of...

Mr. Nyland: What is the fear about.

Linda: I think it might be because at that point I expect or think I deserve, or something ... I expect a result. And actually I think that's the answer that I heard when I wanted to verify it.

Mr. Nyland: As soon as there is something that is like fear or anticipation, it takes place in your ordinary brain; and when it is a little bit stronger than before—that is, more intense—there is a chance that that what is the little 'I' doesn't want to exist any longer because it doesn't get enough food.

You see, you have to look at these things that there are two parts; that both have to be fed, and they are fed by energy as represented by a wish. So the continuation of my ordinary unconscious state naturally will take place because I'm keeping on breathing and I have all kind of thoughts and so forth in the rest of my brain, but there is a certain section in the brain that I also want to feed because of my wish to be Awake or my wish to become Aware. So when there is a division between such energies, when one takes a tremendous amount there is very little left for the other.

As soon as you catch yourself that you become excited or that you have anticipation or that there is fear, you stop it.

Linda: And from then on, the Work attempt disappears.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. It disappears and it's no good anymore; it has lost its value and it has gone on

the wrong road, and it would need a detour before it comes back. It's much easier to simply say stop, come back to yourself, close your eyes and say "Here I sit," then you're back again.

Whenever the brain or the feeling starts to become a little too predominant, in the beginning you simply say "Oh, calm down, forget it."

Empty your brain if you can.

[Aside (to Jim): Are you listening? Jim: Yes.]

Mr. Nyland: Empty your feeling as much as you can. When you finish with dinner you relax your body, you make an attempt. This is not Work but it is a preliminary attempt before Work, and if you do it Work would become more successful. You simply sit and you are very quiet, and you try to relax your brain first.

You see, you start with your head. Have I ever explained to you this relaxation exercise?

Linda: Do you mean Draining?

Mr. Nyland: Draining?

Linda: I have heard of the term, but I never heard it explained.

Mr. Nyland: Well, I would then advise you to get a tape on the Draining exercise and the Sensing exercise, listen to it quite well and then see if you can do something with it.

All right?

Linda: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: Find out from someone where the tape is. I... What was it? You remember? 1331? Okay, you ask Jean. Listen to it quietly, then you know what is meant by the term and you can apply it. Particularly after you finish with your meal, sit for a few moments. Never mind what other people think. They probably think that you are very much in silence and meditation, even they will look at you and say "Look, there is a Zen student trying to uncover the truth of the world."

All right?

Linda: Yea, I'll listen to it.

Mr. Nyland: Good.

Yah, you got it ... you got that brain working and you prevented other work?

Jim: --[not audible].

Mr. Nyland: It's no joke.

Jim: Actually I'm not joking.

Mr. Nyland: No. It's no joke at all.

Jim: It's been fairly successful in an actuality, but in between...

Mr. Nyland: In between is no good.

Jim: No.

Mr. Nyland: Either one or the other.

Come children, *what*.

Yah.

Phyllis Lehman: Um, it's sometimes when I hear you talk and I compare the things that I've been raised in in Judaism, a lot of times they seem to be different, like a different approach or a different kind of philosophy.

Mr. Nyland: Were you very Orthodox brought up?

Phyllis: No, but it's been very much of a Jewish background. But not...

Mr. Nyland: Even that ... out of what—the Talmud?

Phyllis: No, it's been more of an education kind of thing and just an atmosphere more or less.

Mr. Nyland: Yes.

Phyllis: And my father's always been very into reading, but not in any regular orthodox fashion.

Mr. Nyland: Have you ever read any yourself—Jewish literature?

Phyllis: Uh-huh.

Mr. Nyland: What.

Phyllis: I can't think of anything offhand, it's just been there all of the time. I also spent a lot of time in Israel. I was there for about three years.

Mr. Nyland: Where. Jerusalem?

Phyllis: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Did you like it?

Phyllis: In some ways.

Mr. Nyland: Yah? What did you get out of it that you still think about now.

Phyllis: There's one thing that I don't understand, is that ... I was just thinking of it right now, that ... in Hebrew when you try to be a good person they say you that you are a Mensch, which means to be a Man. And it is to be concerned with God ... and concerned with these things that we are interested in they are concerned about. So that life itself is...

Mr. Nyland: They are *there* more or less, aren't they? What did you find in Israel. They are

more concerned with it?

Phyllis: With life?

Mr. Nyland: Yes. Or, to be a son of Man?

Phyllis: It's there in most of the country in that the Bible is read all the time. There's always ... there's the discussion of this from early childhood.

Mr. Nyland: Yes. You think there is that kind of sincerity? Or is it superficial.

Phyllis: I think... One thing I learned is that when they read in school from a very young age the Bible all the time, and there's always a discussion about which type of Man is better and in what way he's better.

Mr. Nyland: Yes, they lose themselves a great deal in theosophical or philosophical discussions.

Phyllis: In certain things, yes.

Mr. Nyland: But, how about their behavior—or the creation of an atmosphere, or the kindness, or consideration, or being able to sacrifice. To do something. Family relationships, of course they do exist and they are much closer many times, but the general behavior of a person like your father, like your mother, to what extent do you dare to criticize that. Or, to what extent do you think that you are behaving correctly. Or, what is your concept of a son of Man. And if you keep on thinking about that, you see; what is the meaning of that kind of religion; or, what is Judaism for you in your application of your life—to whatever extent you can apply it.

You see, when you say there are differences between one and the other, I can agree. But, then you have to say in what way.

Phyllis: I know that that's the difference that bothers me.

Mr. Nyland: Good.

Phyllis: One thing is that in Judaism it's like ... I mean, the way I understand that, it's life and concern with life and God is something which is ... who's not eminent, something which is more or less far away. And like even someone like Moses; he was always considered a great teacher, and when you're a child you're always aware that he was a man and he had his faults and never to accept him as anything more than that.

Mr. Nyland: You mean he had no faults?

Phyllis: No, he was a man with his faults.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. That is why he never got further than the Mount Nebo and Sinai, and he only could look at the land and never enter. So he had something to atone for, at the same time he

was a good teacher.

What are the people in the religion that appeal to you, or whatever you have gotten from the reading of the Bible.

Phyllis: Well, there's one thing that I'm thinking of now, is this constant pointing out that in the Bible ... in the Passover it's always God who took us out of the land of Egypt. Moses is not mentioned.

Mr. Nyland: Well, he was only a guide. He was acting under the influence of God.

What's your concept of God.

Phyllis: I don't think about it.

Mr. Nyland: You don't dare?

Phyllis: Hmm?

Mr. Nyland: You don't dare?

Phyllis: No.

Mr. Nyland: No. It's right. It's a good thing to be apprehensive. What's your idea of life; when the emphasis is on life—or, when you say, in comparing it, the emphasis in Judaism is on life, what is it with Gurdjieff.

Phyllis: I don't know.

Mr. Nyland: Then you cannot compare it.

Phyllis: What I was comparing, was a spiritual concept.

Mr. Nyland: Good, let's talk about the spiritual part. Is that life?

Phyllis: It's only ... it's only after new life—what life is there after that.

Mr. Nyland: No. Don't you think there is at the present time a spiritual part in you? No?

Phyllis: I don't know.

Mr. Nyland: You don't know. You think that spiritual and emotional have a certain similarity? When you have a feeling, a feeling itself of course is not material, is it. It may express itself as a material form and then it becomes an expression of the feeling; but the feeling itself, the feeling of well-being when you take a deep breath and you feel that you are alive ... and this realization is not material. It ends up by being material and feeling alive, and then you say my body is 'healthy' or I can 'lick' so-and-so and I can 'move mountains'; you know, but that is only an expression of that kind of a state, and the state itself is quite free from material considerations. Even breathing, as breath, is different from solid matter like a table or like a body.

Now, what is life. The sense of your life, of the knowledge that you exist and that you maintain it by means of keeping on breathing and eating; and that feeds life in you, but now when life is there and then it wants to be expressed, in what way? There are different ways, of course. First, movements of the body and the way it is, the way it behaves, the way it can walk. But in the second place, that what is an emotional quality and one calls 'wishes,' 'aspirations,' the kind of desire for certain things that are not here as yet. The wish to create. The wish for something that is almost impossible to reach. Emotion: That what I feel I am at the present time and wishing for myself to continue with that kind of a feeling; and then when it is restricted that I feel that if I only could be free from it, then I would give life the real value.

And, you see, to what extent, when one is very young and trying to look at life, of how it's going to be and what you wish for it, and how you would grow up, and what you then expect—this expectation is a form of life and it reflects, then, two ways: What I wish to become, that what will be in the future with what I now have which can grow, and the Aspiration is always that what I wish to reach, aspire to; that what I want to consider as a means I have, is the Inspirational quality of myself within. And I make a distinction, now, between that what I would like to become and the means by means of which I will become that on account of the wish; and that the reality for me, in growing into that what I wish to become, is a little different from that what now gives me the motivating force to actually go there. And then I make a distinction between that what is for me outer life as manifestation, and that what is inner life which is much more spiritual. The spiritual qualities of Man, of course, are inside. They come out every once in a while in some form of expression or in a way ... the kind of a word that is used, or sometimes in the posture, or sometimes in prayer, in the way one closes one's eyes and keeps quiet and then tries to exclude all the rest; or whatever it is that I happen to think about when I say this is 'life' for me and I want to go there, even in reading the Bible that something happens that I say, "Yes, I am part of what is really meant, and this is my life." And this kind of Inspirational quality that comes in: I know that it cannot be linked up with that what is matter because matter will have an end, but I hope that the spirit will continue to live. And therefore that emphasis on that form of life becomes much more important.

But, don't judge just yet about what Gurdjieff says about Working and Observing oneself; because, in the first place there has to be that kind of a wish and it has to be based on the motivation of knowing that I want to grow further, *that* wish for this kind of an evolution has to

come from somewhere inside of me. Because I know that that what is my body will die after some time; and if I want to live eternally or if ultimately I hope to understand what is meant by God, that then I will have to be on the road and acquire gradually certain attributes which belong to God.

As far as Gurdjieff is concerned, it's probably fully as religious as any other religion. It is not dogmatic. It is really a doctrine which is alive and in which the philosophy of one's life can be changed into the religion which belongs to the formation of that what one is and with that what one wishes to become.

Keep on reading, but a little bit more deeper ideas. Read the Zohar. Try to get hold of it. It's an explanation of the first five chapters of the Bible, but it is a little bit cabalistic and it gives you an insight of that what is really in back of it all. And it's not easy reading, but it's interesting because it will start thinking.

Ask more questions that way: So that you become clear about your own life. Are you coming to Mondays? Good.

Yah.

New Questioner: What is praying, and when do you do it?

Mr. Nyland: Well, prayer of course is trying to make a contact with that kind of a force which is higher than you are. One prays to something which is above you. Prayer in the sense of religion, is usually an indication that that what I wish for myself, that I need some kind of force or help, I say, from 'Above.' If I say it is God I give it already a name, if I say it's my 'better self' and I pray to become that what I'm not now but that I would like to become and I try to define it, it is a form of prayer. When I do it: Is simply when I need it, when I believe that there is something that I want from the external world or that what is outside of myself ... outside of this Earth; or to what extent I understand concepts of religion, of that what is a totality as a universe and then imagine that God to Whom I pray—or whatever it is that I pray to—is away from there, and then if my prayer is sufficiently serious and concentrated and if there is in this prayer a Oneness of myself, that I then hope that somehow or other it will be heard somewhere and that, as a result of that prayer it will be heard and it will be answered.

Prayer really has two different reasons: One is to be able to express oneself, hoping that that what one is saying will reach a higher level of Being and then be returned in the form of an answer; and the second is that whenever I pray I put myself in a certain attitude of wishing to

receive certain things I don't have. So with it goes a certain humility of that what kind of a knowledge I have, that I'm willing to sacrifice whatever it is for the sake of receiving something that is worth more. And this particular state in which one then prays, has a very definite effect on oneself by excluding the different influences from the outside and returning to that what is oneself within, and in that kind of a Silence that then I hope that my prayer will be heard and that I, in such Silence, will be able to hear the answer.

Were you religiously brought up?

Questioner: Um ... no, just the opposite. But ... well, you know...

Mr. Nyland: One reads about it.

Questioner: But from the other people I have been studying, and...

Mr. Nyland: That's right. Good. Does it appeal to you to pray?

Questioner: Well, ah, help and guidance is something that I would really like to get; and I don't quite exactly know how to go about getting it and what exactly I have to put in—you know, to get back what I want.

Mr. Nyland: Pray to your higher self.

Questioner: You say ... you said something about sacrifice.

Mr. Nyland: Sacrifice means that I want to gain something that is worth more than what I have and I'm willing to give up, that would be a sacrifice. If I'm willing to give up something in order to get something else that is worth more, I have to sacrifice what I have. It becomes more of a sacrifice, the more I'm attached to it; so sacrifice means a loosening up of that what I now consider a bondage—or, that what is for me part of myself which is sometimes difficult to separate from myself.

I don't think it's necessary to sacrifice all the time, but it may be necessary every once in a while if the stakes are high.

All right? Good.

Judith Conty: Um, I'd like to know about intuition. It seems to me that since I have come in to Work I'm understanding and I'm knowing things with a different part of me, and also it seems like there is ... studying it they're all ... I felt that I developed something, that there's a certain part of me which I can only explain as being Intuition. Whereas before I thought that most of the things were channeled through a kind of intellect, I think it's being redirected to what I call intuition.

Mr. Nyland: No, it's not entirely that—although in principle it's correct. There are two different ways by which knowledge can reach you. One is the ordinary intellectual way which expresses itself in words or formulations or a logical building up of concepts, or whatever there is that is related by association as an intellectual process. The other is a form of knowledge which reaches one through a means that we don't know very much about because it cannot be defined in any words, nevertheless the knowledge is there in the brain and all of a sudden it appears, and the only way by which it can be you might say 'understood' a little bit, is that the way it reaches you is of an emotional quality. Although, it is not an emotional something that stays within one's emotions only. It is an emotional concept that comes by means of a feeling of which one doesn't know how it comes, but nevertheless one is affected; and then it is converted into the knowledge and appears in the brain, and that what we call in ordinary life to have a 'hunch' or in German, an '*Ahnfühlung*'—of that what is like a presentiment—indicates that certain forms of knowledge exist apparently around us or in the atmosphere, and if one becomes sensitive to it they can enter and need not enter through the ears only.

You see, it's a question of sensitivity. As far as Work is concerned, that what takes place in the division of the centers which are, in an ordinary unconscious state, very much connected with each other: As a result of trying to make attempts of Waking Up, the different centers become a little bit looser; and because of this the intellectual center, and also the emotional one, start to function more and more on their own, and because of that the emotional center will receive certain impressions direct as emotional which then are not ... you might say, have to go somewhere else to be described, but can stay in the emotional center and then produce there a very definite emotion in the form of a vibration.

Whenever that takes place and there it more of that kind of energy which is in the emotions, some of it will become knowledge. And the question of knowledge which reaches by means of intuition: The intuition is not to be described in any intellectual sense and it is a road which I do not know, the same way as I say the wind comes and goes ... and I don't know where it comes from and I don't know where it goes, but I know it is there. It's the same thing as all of a sudden a thought appears without any rhyme or reason; without any logical building up leading to the thought it happens to be, and the only assumption that I can make is—when one is sensitive and one can have ... impressions reach either through sense organs, or can affect the heart directly, or in some extreme cases can affect the body as a whole and start in the body a

rate of vibration corresponding to an outside, let's say a sound.

There are three ways by which a person can become sensitive, and fortunately he's not dependent only on his intellect. It depends where a person lives and what the accent is of his life in regard to any one of the three centers. But when the three centers become a little bit separated from each other they start to function on their own, and the increased sensitivity means that there is more chance for energy to enter into any one of them, which energy then stays there and starts to function. With the emotional center it is a changing-over of that what is peripheral as a solar plexus to that what becomes inner life which is one's heart; and it is usually when it reaches the heart that it gives a certain form of ... not necessarily a form, but a certain kind of knowledge which, when it is in the heart belongs to an understanding of a level of one's Being. That is really where the difference is. Intuition belongs to a level of Being and it does not belong necessarily ... although it comes through an emotional quality, it doesn't stay there.

The level of Being for a Man is determined by the relationships of his centers, and the more the centers are separated and then can be harmoniously combined, the higher the level of his Being.

Does that explain it a little?

Judith: Yes. Well, do you mean that there isn't, for example, intuition ... like the three centers are each divided into certain...

Mr. Nyland: Not necessarily. The centers are not divided.

Judith: Well, for instance you have emotional and feeling, part of the intellectual one.

Mr. Nyland: That is different. That is the changeover of the emotional center as a whole from a feeling capacity into an emotional capacity.

Judith: In other words, you couldn't talk of an intellectual ... intuition of the intellectual center, and an intuition of the...

Mr. Nyland: There are certain thought forms that appear all of a sudden which are intuitively intellectualized. That is correct, they do exist. When one says a ‘precognition,’ one talks about that. The whole question of telepathy, the question of clairvoyance, the question of a spiritual world existing, extrasensory perceptions, parapsychology—all of that belongs to that field of a recognition of certain things existing which reach us; not through ordinary sense organs, but nevertheless are located and become apparent as a certain form of knowledge without knowing where it has come from. How it reaches depends entirely on the sensitivity of the brain, and the

same thing applies to one's feeling. Or on the condition in which one happens to live, that is the charging of the atmosphere with a certain kind of knowledge which happens to be in the atmosphere as a whole; and sometimes they are considered and also used ... the term used for it is a 'thought form,' that is a configuration and we use simply the term 'ether' for it in order to define it, but it is very difficult to define it in any event. It is a configuration of a certain substance which is more ethereal, that is not even like air but it is much more like a magnetic force which affects at certain distances because of the attraction of, you might say, of a current between two points. Whenever this kind of a configuration takes on the form that it can contain a concept, it can reach the intellect penetrating like an X ray would penetrate; and then affect functionings in the brain which, in the brain are translated into forms or formulated as words. It's a very interesting part of science—of how a brain can start to function—and when it starts to function in that way it is very much on the way of becoming Conscious; and reversely, in becoming Conscious it becomes much more perceptive. All people who become Conscious will become clairvoyant—in time.

Did you have your hand up?

New Questioner: Yes. Could you recommend a book on that subject?

Mr. Nyland: Oh, there are lots of them.

Questioner: From the beginning? ... the beginning, please?

Mr. Nyland: Have you ever read any of it?

Questioner: Very little. Nothing.

Mr. Nyland: You know anything about Cayce?

Questioner: Very little.

Mr. Nyland: Read a little more. Read a little more. There's another book by Gerber on the spiritual world, there's a book on telepathy, I'll give you some titles of some books if you're interested in this. J. W. Rhine—you know, professor Rhine, I mean [note: J.B. Rhine, parapsychology, Duke University] Oh, there is a great deal. Start with William James. Start with The Betty Book. Whatever there is that one can find out about spiritual seances, including the Ouija board, planchette ... ah, there is a whole world that is open for you.

Questioner: So, there is something to read about.

Mr. Nyland: No, it's right. And it's something that usually is kind of mocked at because it is not supposed to be science. Oh yes, much ... there's the whole process of hypnotism—what takes

place—I would almost say such things are not to be sneezed at.

So, what else. Yah.

Mark Oberon: Mr. Nyland, what is your opinion of Manly Palmer Hall?

Mr. Nyland: Oh, I like him.

Mark: That's my reaction, too, but sometimes I have the feeling...

Mr. Nyland: What did you read.

Mark; Oh, I've read almost anything I could get my hands on. And I do remember them and it's a barrel full of knowledge and information, but at no point was there anything like you would get in the Gurdjieff system...

Mr. Nyland: That's right.

Mark: ...where there's what you...

Mr. Nyland: That's right. So it is very interesting, but you have to do your own digging.

Mark: Yes. And, uh, I suppose it doesn't harm to know all that information.

Mr. Nyland: No. Only, it sometimes may be a waste of time because you have to dig so often through certain things without getting anywhere.

Mark: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: If you take the Secret Doctrine of Blavatsky, there's a tremendous amount of information in it; and sometimes you don't know where she got it or whatever it is; but it is not assorted, and the result is that she herself has not been able to communicate what is really a essential point. Or one can give her the benefit of the doubt—that she intentionally hid it—but it takes such a long time to read through three volumes of Secret Doctrine, two volumes of Isis Unveiled, and who has the time? So you say Manly Hall: Yes it's interesting, so is a great many of the different books that have been published all over. I mentioned Zohar: Five volumes of it, who can have the time to read it. And one dips into it and you extract from it certain things that you recognize, and the ones that are there that you don't recognize may be of value if you only knew a little bit more about it. But it's true everywhere and it always has been true; at the present time it's a little worse because you can get almost anything published, but already a hundred or two hundred years ago the cabalistic literature is filled with information and a lot of misinformation, and where will you find the pearls that actually will enable you to build a house.

So when you say it is interesting—yes, go ahead. How much time to spend on it—I don't know. I think if one is a voracious reader then you can get certain things out of it by looking at

the page of a book instead of having to read it. Sometimes when you take a book in your hand you may be sensitive to the atmosphere it's created. Sometimes the way it is printed or the way it is published, the way it is put together sometimes the sentence that is set in a certain way will make you close the book in disgust. Sometimes when a person thinks that he knows and then writes and shows that he doesn't know, it's not worth the time. Thousands and thousands of books, but don't believe that everything that is printed is true.

More questions? Otherwise we close up this box of vanity.

Mark: Uh, one more kind of a book. Uh, I asked you about Lobsang Rampa, what your opinion was. I read...

Mr. Nyland: The Third Eye?

Mark: ...two or three of them and it was fascinating, but it all sounded...

Mr. Nyland: Yah. But I told you that he was discredited?

Mark: Yeah—and you told me that he was. I forget the exact words, something to the effect that he's a phony.

Mr. Nyland: Oh yes, I said that.

Mark; And just so that I may know in order to, say, carry this on to somebody else: Uh, from where ... how was he discredited.

Mr. Nyland: Oh. I think somebody about two years or so ago—after the book made a little bit ... The Third Eye made quite a furor; and when they started to investigate he had never been in Tibet, and this whole drilling of a hole in the center of his forehead, that was woozy. [laughter] I ... I probably I can look it up somewhere—that it was published in a reputable journal, you know, and the man was exposed. I think that you could find it in the public library, without doubt, more or less recent. Otherwise I have someone in England who will remember, if I come across it I'll let you know.

Mark: All right. And one more, Mr. Nyland, about this latest person on the occult or esoteric scene: It’s Maharishi...

Mr. Nyland: Oh.

Mark: ...or however you pronounce the name.

Mr. Nyland: Ma-ha-rishi.

Mark: Ma-ha-rishi.

Mr. Nyland: Uh-huh. Yeah.

Mark: The one the Beatles went to.

Mr. Nyland: Oh. Yah. Sure, we know. They gave so much publicity that even I heard about it. [laughter] Well, all right. There he is and there you are—now what.

Mark: The reason I ask is because other people have asked me about it, and I haven't said a word.

Mr. Nyland: Did you buy his little book?

Mark: No.

Mr. Nyland: And add to the quantity of wealth that he has accumulated.

Mark: No, I didn't.

Mr. Nyland: Oh, buy it. Then you have an impression. A beautiful picture on the front where he sits in meditation, and the back page or the end where he receives flowers and distributes them and has a smile on his face.

You want my opinion? He stinks. [laughter]

Mark: That's why I didn't buy the book either.

Mr. Nyland: Huh?

Mark: That's why I didn't buy the book.

Mr. Nyland: You didn't but it? You would have more judgment... Unless you know what you're talking about. I bought the book—no, I had someone buy it for me [laughter]—but anyhow, I have it.

Mark: Oh. And then there is another book I have about Gurdjieff Work called something—The Game ... uh, The Master Game...

Mr. Nyland: De Ropp, was it?

Mark: ...which ... uh, I am going to have to buy that and glance through it and, uh...

Mr. Nyland: De Ropp is in California, he lives in Sonoma and he has some groups. And he used to ... I was going to say used to know a little bit about Gurdjieff, he was here the last time when Gurdjieff was in New York—the last year. He came originally from England and he was affected by Ouspensky and came from Ouspensky ... via the Ouspensky group to some of the groups that we had here with Gurdjieff, including movements and so forth. I will tell you more about his life if you want to know. I think The Master Game also is not worth very much and what ... of course what I've heard, hearsay. I haven't seen him for years and years, but at the time when I did see him it was quite frequent and we talked more than enough together for me to have an opinion. It is not very high, but read The Master Game and see what you get out of it.

So then we close, all right? And next week you meet here without me and you can imagine I am here; and as I say, you bring up the subject of Work on yourself, and then it's up to all of you to keep it up to that level. And then when we see each other again, I hope in two weeks, you can tell me all about it—where your brain went, for instance, and how often you thought of remembering yourself after eating in a restaurant.

Goodbye everybody, have a good couple of weeks.

End of tape